

## **ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WILDLIFE & FRESHWATER FISH MEETING MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, May 30, 2017**

**Richardson & Robbins Building Auditorium**

**89 Kings Highway, Dover, Delaware**

**Phone 302-739-9912, FAX 302-739-6157**

### **ADVISORY COUNCIL**

1. Edward A. Montague, Chair
2. Garrett Grier, Jr., Vice Chair (Absent)
3. Raymond F. Burris
4. Neal Dukes
5. Craig A. Karsnitz
6. Joe C. Johnson
7. Steven M. Kendus (Absent)
8. Dale R. Scuse

### **DIVISION OF FISH & WILDLIFE**

1. Rob Hossler
2. Chief Drew Aydelotte
3. Craig Rhoads
4. Emily Boyd
5. Justyn Foth
6. Joe Rogerson

### **PUBLIC**

9 Visitors

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Montague at 7:00 PM.

#### **Agenda Item 1. Approval of Minutes (Chairman).**

A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve the April 25, 2017 meeting minutes as written.

#### **Agenda Item 2. Wildlife Area Habitat Improvements (Craig Rhoads).**

Craig Rhoads, wildlife program manager, gave a PowerPoint presentation on habitat management activities on state wildlife areas. The Division currently manages over 60,000 acres of land that is divided up among 20 wildlife areas. Mr. Rhoads showed examples of food plots, hedgerows, and early successional habitat being established on state wildlife areas. Examples included clover and wildflower pollinator strips which provide multiple benefits to both game and non-game species. Mr. Rhoads also reported that the Division has increased the number of sunflower fields to levels similar to previous years. Mr. Rhoads also showed examples of fallow disking, field buffers, invasive species control, pond management, wetland restoration, field edge feathering, and forest stand improvements occurring on state wildlife areas.

#### **Agenda Item 3. Shad Hatchery Update (Johnny Moore).**

This agenda item was postponed until the June 27 meeting.

#### **Agenda Item 4. Turkey Harvest Update (Justyn Foth).**

Justyn Foth, waterfowl and gamebird biologist gave a PowerPoint presentation on the 2017 Spring Turkey Season. The 2017 season yielded 652 birds of which 548 (84%) were toms, 101 were jakes and three were bearded hens. Delaware residents harvested 611 turkeys, whereas hunters from eleven other states harvested the remaining 41 birds. Turkeys were harvested in 17 of the 18 wildlife management zones. Three zones stood out as turkey “hot spots” – Zones 4, 6, and 7 all in western Kent County. The only zone where no turkeys were harvested was Wildlife Management Zone 1A in New Castle County north of I-95/295. Eighty-four percent of the turkeys were harvested from private land while 18 different publicly-owned lands had at least one turkey harvested, with Redden State Forest having the highest public-land harvest followed by Norman G. Wilder and Midlands Wildlife Areas. Additional highlights of the 2017 turkey season included the harvest of 27 “non-typical” turkeys, consisting of gobblers with more than one beard and one turkey with two spurs on each of its legs. This year’s longest beard was 12.5 inches, the longest spurs were two inches and the heaviest tom was 25 pounds, 11 ounces.

Dr. Foth provided a data summary to Council members and audience.

#### **Agenda Item 5. Division Update (Rob Hossler).**

Rob Hossler, wildlife section administrator, provided a Division update.

Mr. Hossler reported that the Division is ready for implementation of the Conservation Access Pass (CAP) which will become effective on July 1, 2017. This CAP is

required for all registered motor vehicles accessing state wildlife areas. CAP training has been scheduled for licensed agents next week with staff training in two weeks. Informational rack cards will be distributed, a press release will be issued next week and appropriate signage has been designed and received. Signs will be erected at wildlife areas and wildlife area parking lots during the first week of July.

S.B. #31, introduced by the General Assembly which would allow a hunter to use a handgun in lieu of a shotgun on farms enrolled in the Department's deer depredation programs, passed the Senate (18 to 0 in favor) and is now assigned to the House Natural Resources Committee.

H.B. #156, which changes the handgun calibers used for deer to a range of calibers, passed the House Agriculture Committee. This legislation would also allow selected pistol caliber rifles to be used during the handgun season and in lieu of a shotgun.

H.B. #157, which would allow the use of an air bow in lieu of a shotgun, also passed the House Agriculture Committee (11 to 0 in favor).

### **CONSTITUENT COMMENTS**

Andrew Martin, field ecologist for Delaware Wild Lands, read a statement on the Coastal Zone Act and requested that his comments be included in the minutes as part of the record.

"Delaware Wild Lands would like to bring to the attention of the Council that H.B. #190, regarding changes to the Coastal Zone Act, will be voted on next week by the legislature. By way of standing, Delaware Wild Lands has been in existence for over 50 years and we now own and manage over 21,000 acres of critical open space. We range from traditional land uses including hunting, agriculture, and forestry as well as for ecological restoration. Delaware Wild Lands feels that it is critically important to protect the coastal zone and that proposed changes to the CZA represent the views of a limited number of stakeholders without fully considering impacts on Delaware fish and wildlife habitat. With regard to specific proposed changes, Delaware Wild Lands is opposed to bulk transfer because it is counter to the decades and millions of dollars of both public and private investments made to protect these areas, and would serve to fragment important wildlife habitat, and would foster additional development within and threats to Delaware's sensitive coastal areas. Delaware Wild Lands also believes it is important to consider how the siting of additional heavy industry would be impacted by sea level rise and

potential impacts to land, water and wildlife resources during periods of inundation. Thank you for your time."

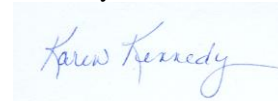
### **AGENDA FOR THE 6/27/2017 ADVISORY**

#### **COUNCIL MEETING**

1. Approval of Minutes (Chairman).
2. Shad Hatchery Update (Johnny Moore).
3. Conservation Access Pass (Karen Bennett).
4. Division Update (Rob Hossler).

There being no further business, a motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 8:01 PM.

Sincerely,



Karen Kennedy  
Recording Secretary